

**ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING ON THE
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN
IGBO-ETITI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA,
ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA.**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of guidance and counselling on students' academic performance in senior secondary school. The study took place in community secondary school Aku, in Igbo-Etiti local government area of Enugu state, Nigeria. The study used a quasi-experimental design. Two research hypotheses led the investigation. The study sampled 90 SSS1 80 SSS2 students, 80 SSS3 students using a multistage sampling technique. The data were analyzed using both descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations and inferential statistics such as the independent sample t-test. The conclusion demonstrated a statistically significant difference in academic performance between students who received counselling and those who did not receive counselling, favouring those who received counselling. Additionally, the findings suggested that there is no statistically significant difference in academic achievement between students who received counselling based on their gender. It is recommended that counselling services should be properly established and supervised in all secondary schools in Enugu state. Thus, proper supervision of counselling services will help our growing children adjust effectively in their academic studies.

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Keynotes: Guidance and Counselling, Academic performance, senior secondary school students and Nsukka education zone

Introduction

Secondary education is influenced by several factors that have caused a decline in academic province. Factors that can cause this decline are teaching methodology, poor educational administration, home experiences (broken homes), government negligent to education, poverty, poor mental health and poor inter-personal relation between teachers and student's attitude of secondary school students. Senior secondary school students are adolescents who are between the ages of 13 years and 20 years of age.

Adolescents are secondary school students who struggle to attain good academic performance, psychological and emotional balances in school system. Chigbu, Ofojebe, Grace, Uzoekwe and Mokwelu, (2022) define adolescents as young persons in secondary school. Adolescents are usually at the phase of various changes which occurs physical, psychological among others, they seek independents from parents and significant orders to make their own decision about life. However, because they are at the peak of their development and quest for exploit they need good guidance and counselling in order to attain to a greater academic performance and emotional balances.

Thus, most government secondary schools are facing challenges as regard short fall of Guidance and Counsellors (Chigbu, Nwobi, Ngwaka & Mokwelu, 2021). A counsellor is a person whose vocation is disposed towards building the reputation, inspiration, aspiration, personality and skills of students through counselling. Counselling is a helping relationship where a person is assisted in a face to face interaction (Bola & Chigbu 2021). Ebizie (2016) defines counselling as a learning process in which a counsellor helps an individual or individuals learn, understand themselves and their environmental and adhere to a good and profitable behaviour capable of boosting the overall aspects of the person. Through counselling, counsellors build self-esteem of the client, reassures if the clients is insecure, solicits the clients own feelings and ideas for solution, shows empathy and care to the client, builds confidence, integrates students in a new environment and facilitates successful communication among school administrators, parents and students (Chigbu, Ngwaka & Onu 2020). Chega (2015) affirms that school counselling interventions promote academic success of students. It is also believed that the academic survival of students is largely dependent on the professional counselling services (Roy, 2014).

Counselling services have become essential programs in schools for academic achievement of senior secondary school students. Thus, Nwachukwu (2007) notes that if the 6-3-3-4 educational system must succeed, then the place of guidance and counselling services should not be overlooked. Thus, through ascertaining the roles of guidance and counsellor he future of graduates maybe assured for employability and competitiveness in the global market (Eberechukwu & Sanusi, 2022). However, counselling provides global competitiveness which

helps to globalization and positive impact on every aspect of individual life (Chigbu, Suleh, Grace & Mokwelu, 2022).

Academic performance is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has attained their short or long-term educational goals (Von, Hell & Chamorro, 2011). Operationally, academic performance is the extent and ability a senior secondary school student has in attaining educational prerequisites for obtaining certified honour in form of an award of academic achievement. In lieu of the above obtainable qualifications, the duty and roles of a Guidance and Counselling can never be neglected.

Dubone, Graham and Fabea (2015) researched on the impact of guidance and counselling on academic performance in Darmaa Senior High School in the Dormaa Central Municipality of the Brong-Ahanfo Region of Ghana pre-test and posttest control group design was experimental design was used as the research frame for the study. 40 students were selected 20 for experiment group and 20 for control group for the study. The study revealed that guidance and counselling services have a positive effect on student's academic achievement. Therefore, guidance and counselling improves the accomplishment of students through academic achievement.

Bahago, Fadipe and Nene (2021) conducted a study on the impact of guidance and counselling services on the academic performance of science students in public secondary schools in Bwari Area council of federal capital territory. Quantitative description research is conducted to determine if counselling services have any impact on science selected student's academic performance and was tested using mean and standard deviation. Four schools were for the study, with total population of 1,800 science students. Two groups participated in the study, the first group consisted of 20 qualified science teachers (five from each school) and the second group comprised of 200 secondary school science students (fifty from each) selected at random. The study revealed that counselling services helps to boosts academic performance among science students in the area studied.

Another study aimed at looking at the effects of guidance and counselling services on student's academic performance and career choice in selected secondary schools in Yola metropolis (Ateequ, 2022). Descriptive survey design was used. The researcher selected six schools (3 private schools and 3 public schools), using simple random technique. Thirty students in each school were finally selected through simple random sampling techniques, thus making a total of one hundred and eighty (180) senior secondary students that participated in the study. Three hypothesis were used with data gathered using a researcher designed instrument tagged effect of guidance and counselling services on students' academic performance and career choice questionnaire (EGCSSAPCCQ). The findings revealed that a significant difference was found on the basis of respondents on the number of times the students visited the counsellor.

Chega (2015) investigated the effects of guidance and counselling services on academic performance of secondary school students in south Nyadarua sub-country. The population of the study comprised of the students, teacher-counsellors and principals from 24 public secondary schools of Nyandarua south sub-country of Nyandarua country. The sample size

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consisted of 362 students, 10 school-counsellor and 10 principals. Stratified, systematic and lottery methods were employed in choosing simple population. The instruments used were questionnaires. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics and findings were presented by use of pie-charts, graphs, percentages and tables. The data revealed that students perceived guidance and counselling services positively and this positive perception improve study habits and academic performance of students.

According to the preceding assertions and findings, guidance and counselling have a greater impact on student's academic performance. Based on all these updates, the researchers are still worried on the reason for the alarming rate of failure among secondary school students accompanying by the extent examination malpractice is being inculcated among students in Enugu state. According to Emma (2019), there is high rate of poor academic performance of students in Enugu state. This could be due to one or two thing. Guidance and counselling in Nigeria secondary schools is facing numerous challenges. The issues range from lack of appraisal tools for counselling, poor physical facilities for counselling, inadequate communication by counsellors with teachers, administrators, students and parents, high rate of students to counsellors, lack of funds for counselling activities, lack of time allotment for counselling services (Conchi in Chigbu et al, 2020). Furthermore, despite several efforts by education stakeholders and parents to equip students academically, the academic performance and achievement are poor. It is based on this background and state of art that the researchers aim to analyse the impact of guidance and counselling on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Nsukka education zone of Enugu State.

Objectives of the study

The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To determine the impact of guidance and counselling on the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu state, Nigeria.
2. To determine if there exists difference in the academic performance of students who undergone counselling services based on gender.

Research Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant difference between students who had undergone counselling and students' who had not undergone counselling academic achievement in second term.

Ho2: There is no significant difference between the male and female students who undergone counselling in their academic performance in second term examination.

Methodology

The population of the study consisted of all senior secondary school (SSS) students at community secondary school Aku, in Igbo-Etiti local government area of Enugu state, Nigeria. The total number of students in the school is 250 out of which 150 are females and 100 are males (PPSMB, Enugu, 2022). In addition, the total number of students in SSS 1, SSS 2 and

SSS 3 are 90, 80 and 80 respectively. The study adopted Quasi experimental design. Quasi experimental design is defined by White and Sabarwal (2011) as a comparison group that is as similar as possible to the treatment group in terms of baseline (pre-intervention) characteristic. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the participants for the study. Through simple random sampling technique 80 students from SS 1 to SS 3 were selected from 250 students. These eighty (80) students were assigned randomly to the experimental (students that undergone counselling) and the control groups (students that did not undergone counselling). Each gender was assigned equally (50%) with the average age of 15 years.

Instrument

Instrument used for data collection were two which are the result of the first term examination and second term examination. Before the treatment commenced, the first term examination was used to assess the level of academic performance of the students. Thereafter, the end of second term result measured the impact of the experiment on the academic achievement of the students.

Treatment Schedule

- Guidance and counselling services were provided to the experimental group on daily basis for 30 minutes for the one session.
- 30 minutes were used for hundred and fifty sessions of group guidance and counselling services conducted.
- Each session comprised of 30 minutes.
- Individual counselling of 15 minutes were conducted for students with more problems.
- Total number of session used was 250.

Results and Discussion

The scores of the students that undergone counselling (the experimental group) and the students who do not undergone counselling (control group) were use to assess students performance at the end of the first term using 6 subjects. Through independent sample t-test the results of the experimental group and the control group were compared and shown in table 1. Apparently, independent sample t-test was used to compare the results of student's end of second term examination results of the experimental group and control group. Finally, the results of the experimental group (students that received counselling) were also compared using independent sample t-test based on gender.

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Performance of Students that undergone Counselling and Students that do not undergone Counselling Based on End of First Semester Results

Table 1: Comparison of performance of students that undergone Counselling and Students that do not undergone Counselling Based on end of First Term Results

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	P-value
Overall Average	Counselling	40		68.26824
	without Counselling	40		69.21528

Table 1, indicated that there is no statistical difference between the overall average score of students who undergone counselling and students who do not undergone counselling. This means that the two groups are on the same level of academic performance before the treatment.

Ho1: There is no significant difference between students who had undergone counselling and students' who had not undergone counselling academic achievement in second term.

Table 2: comparison of Students given Counselling and Students without Counselling

	Counselling	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	P-value
Mathematics	Counselling	40	68.3500	8.53815	.000
	Without Counselling	40	60.9500	9.02120	
English Language	Counselling	40	68.0250	10.65253	.020
	Without Counselling	40	64.9500	10.43970	
Biology	Counselling	40	77.7000	9.81839	.021
	Without Counselling	40	73.2000	9.61728	
Economics	Counselling	40	76.9250	9.87490	.003
	Without Counselling	40	70.2750	9.39955	
Igbo	Counselling	40	79.6500	11.05775	.038
	Without Counselling	40	74.5000	10.93843	
Agric	Counselling	40	79.0750	11.47996	.000
	Without Counselling	40	68.1500	10.52940	
Overall	Counselling	40	76.8924	6.63620	.000
	Without Counselling	40	70.4767	6.99938	

The Null Hypothesis 2 was tested at statistical significance level of 0.05 and the overall results showed that $p = .000$ which is less than 0.05, therefore, null hypothesis 2 was rejected. This implies there is significant differences of end of second term scores of students that undergone counselling and students that do not undergone counselling for the term. The overall mean scores (mean = 76.8924) and standard deviation (SD = 6.63620) of students that undergone counselling is higher than the students that did not undergone counselling with mean score of (mean = 70.4767) and Standard deviation of (SD = 6.99938). Apparently, there is a significance difference between students that undergone counselling and students that do not undergone counselling in the six subjects. This implies that counselling practice has a positive impact on the academic performance of students.

The present study is in line with Bahago, Fadipe and Nene (2021) that conducted a study on the impact of guidance and counselling services on the academic performance of science students in public secondary schools in Bwari Area council of federal capital territory. The study revealed that counselling services helps to boosts academic performance among s students.

H2: There is no significant difference between the male and female students who undergone counselling in their academic performance in second term examination.

Table 2: comparison of students End of Second term performance in subjects based on Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	P-value
Mathematics	Male	40	67.3500	8.43815	.612
	Female	40	69.9500	9.02120	
English Language	Male	40	67.8000	10.55253	.968
	Female	40	68.9500	10.33970	
Biology	Male	40	77.5000	9.71839	.770
	Female	40	69.0000	9.51728	
Economics	Male	40	74.7250	9.77490	.200
	Female	40	79.1500	9.29955	
Igbo	Male	40	79.7500	11.05775	.995
	Female	40	79.7000	10.83843	
Agric	Male	40	79.0750	11.37996	.506
	Female	40	60.1000	10.42940	
Overall	Male	40	83.9924		
	Female	40	79.4767		

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Comparing the performance of male and female students' academic performance, the null hypothesis 2 was test at a significance level of 0.05. The result showed no significance difference existed based on gender (.519) in regards to their overall performance, therefore the null hypothesis was accepted. Subsequently, there was no significance difference in the academic performance of students in all six subject area based on gender. This simply means that the effect of counselling services on students performance does not depend on gender. A study conducted by Ateequ (2022) aimed at looking at the effects of guidance and counselling services on student's academic performance and career choice in selected secondary schools in Yola metropolis slightly contradict the present study as the findings of the study revealed that a significant difference was found on the basis of respondents' base on gender the number of times the students visited the counsellor.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The researchers aimed to assess the impact of guidance and counselling on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Enugu state, Nigeria. The study showed that counselling services has a positive effect on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Enugu state, Nigeria. In addition, the impact of guidance and counselling is not significantly dependent on gender as regards academic performance of senior secondary school students. It is recommended that counselling services should be properly established and supervised in all secondary schools in Enugu state. Thus, proper supervision of counselling services will help our growing children adjust effectively in their academic studies.

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